

Message Text

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ACTION AGRE-00

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DEPARTMENT PASS AGRICULTURE/OGSM AND AID

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TAGS: EPAP, EAID, ETRD, AS, EG, US
SUBJECT: AUSTRALIAN SALES OF WHEAT AND MEAT TO EGYPT

1. AGATTACHE CAIRO WAS VISITED ON 1 JUNE 1978 BY
DAVID RICHARD, COMMERCIAL COUNSELOR, AUSTRALIAN
EMBASSY, CAIRO. RICHARD WISHED TO DISCUSS EGYPTIAN
WHEAT SITUATION BECAUSE OF APPOINTMENT WITH
IBRAHIM DARWISH, DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, GENERAL AUTHORITY
FOR SUPPLY COMMODITIES, MINISTRY OF SUPPLY, ON SATURDAY,
3 JUNE. RICHARD STATED HE WAS SURE DARWISH WOULD
PRESS HIM FOR ADDITIONAL WHEAT FROM AUSTRALIA TO MEET
EGYPT'S CY-1978 NEEDS, AND WOULD BE HOPING FOR CREDIT
TERMS AT LEAST EQUAL TO THOSE OF PRESENT AGREEMENT
(2 YEARS AT COMMERCIAL RATE). RICHARD STATED THAT
AUTRALIA WAS IN NO POSITION TO SELL ADDITIONAL QUANTITIES
WHEAT TO EGYPT AT PRESENT TIME BECAUSE OF POOR HARVEST,
AND MIGHT WELL HAVE TO ASK EGYPT TO ACCEPT SLOWDOWN IN
DELIVERIES UNTIL NEXT HARVEST DURING FALL 1978 (PROSPECTS
GOOD FOR THAT CROP).

2. AFTER DISCUSSION OF EGYPTIAN WHEAT
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SITUATION WITH GENERAL AGREEMENT ON BASIC SUPPLY/DISTRI-
BUTION ESTIMATES, RICHARD ASKED IF IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE
FOR USG TO BEGIN SHIPMENTS OF WHEAT UNDER FY-1979 TITLE I,
PL-480 PROGRAM IMMEDIATELY AFTER BEGINNING OF
FISCAL YEAR ON 1 OCTOBER 1978, WITH AUSTRALIA DELAYING
SOME SHIPMENTS UNTIL DECEMBER 1978 AND THEREAFTER WHEN
NEW CROP WOULD BE AVAILABLE. AGATTACHE CAIRO EXPRESSED

VIEW THIS WAS POSSIBLE, IN PRINCIPLE, BUT CAUTIONED THAT NO COMMITMENTS CAN BE MADE THIS FAR AHEAD OF TIME AND WOULD DEPEND UPON MANY FACTORS (I.E., CONGRESSIONAL ACTION ON APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR FY-1979 TITLE I PROGRAM, TIME REQUIRED TO ALLOCATE FUNDS ON GLOBAL BASIS, UNFORESEEN DIFFICULTIES SUCH AS DELAY IN SIGNING FY-1978 PROGRAM BECAUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS NOT RELEVANT TO EGYPT, ETC.). RICHARD INDICATED HE UNDERSTOOD SITUATION. IT IS LIKELY HE WILL SUGGEST TO DARWISH THAT GOE ASK USG TO TAKE STEPS TO GET FY-1979 TITLE I WHEAT SHIPMENTS MOVING ASAP AFTER BEGINNING OF FISCAL YEAR.

3. WHILE MOST OF DISCUSSION CONCERNED WHEAT, RICHARD MENTIONED THAT AUSTRLIA HAD CAPTURED ALL EGYPTIAN MEAT TENDERS SINCE MARCH BECAUSE OF HEAVY SLAUGHTER BY AUSTRALIAN FARMERS IN VIEW OF POOR FEED PROSPECTS, LACK OF COLD STORAGE FACILITIES, AND RESULTING LOW PRICES. EILTS

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